CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

1. A method in a portable computer having a display screen for increasing portable computer compactness, said method comprising the steps of:

displaying data within said display screen; and

partitioning said display screen into a touch-sensitive input area and a display area, wherein data input at said touch-sensitive input area may be simultaneously displayed in said display area, in response to a particular user input;

detecting if a user's hands are positioned at said touch-sensitive input area; and

graphically displaying a touch-sensitive pad at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area.

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

detecting if said user's hands are no longer positioned at said touch-sensitive input area; and

concealing said touch-sensitive pad from view, in response to detecting if said user's hands are no longer positioned at said touch-sensitive input area.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein the step of graphically displaying a touch-sensitive pad at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a

user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area, further comprises the step of:

graphically displaying a touch-sensitive keyboard at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein the step of graphically displaying a touch-sensitive keyboard at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area, further comprises the step of:

graphically displaying a transparent touch-sensitive keyboard at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area.

5. The method of claim 4 further comprising the step of displaying data in said display area within said display screen, in response to user data entry at said transparent touch-sensitive keyboard.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein the step of graphically displaying a touch-sensitive keyboard at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area, further comprises the step of:

graphically displaying a touch-sensitive ergonomic keyboard at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area.

7. The method of claim 6 further comprising the steps of:

analyzing physical characteristics associated with said user while said user is entering a particular sequence of data utilizing said touch-sensitive keyboard; and

in response to analyzing said physical characteristics, configuring said touch-sensitive keyboard such that the sensitivity of said touch-sensitive keyboard may be raised or lowered according to said physical characteristics associated with said user.

8. A system in a portable computer having a display screen for increasing portable computer compactness, said system comprising:

means for displaying data within said display screen; and

means for partitioning said display screen into a touch-sensitive input area and a display area, wherein data input at said touch-sensitive input area may be simultaneously displayed in said display area, in response to a particular user input;

means for detecting if a user's hands are positioned at said touch-sensitive input area; and

means for graphically displaying a touch-sensitive pad at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area.

9. The system of claim 8 further comprising:

means for detecting if said user's hands are no longer positioned at said touch-sensitive input area; and

means for concealing said touch-sensitive pad from view, in response to detecting if said user's hands are no longer positioned at said touch-sensitive input area.

10. The system of claim 9 wherein said means for graphically displaying a touch-sensitive pad at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein

a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area, further comprises:

means for graphically displaying a touch-sensitive keyboard at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area.

11. The system of claim 10 wherein said means for graphically displaying a touch-sensitive keyboard at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area, further comprises:

means for graphically displaying a transparent touch-sensitive keyboard at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area.

12. The system of claim 11 further comprising means for displaying data in said display area within said display screen, in response to user data entry at said transparent touch-sensitive keyboard.

12. The system of claim 11 wherein said means for graphically displaying a touch-sensitive keyboard at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area, further comprises:

means for graphically displaying a touch-sensitive ergonomic keyboard at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area.

14 ~~13~~. The system of claim 12 further comprising:

means for analyzing physical characteristics associated with said user while said user is entering a particular sequence of data utilizing said touch-sensitive keyboard; and

means for configuring said touch-sensitive keyboard such that the sensitivity of said touch-sensitive keyboard may be raised or lowered according to said physical characteristics associated with said user, in response to analyzing said physical characteristics.

15. A program product residing in computer memory in a portable computer having a display screen for increasing portable computer compactness, said program product comprising:

instruction means residing in a computer memory for displaying data within said display screen; and

instruction means residing in a computer memory for partitioning said display screen into a touch-sensitive input area and a display area, wherein data input at said touch-sensitive input area may be simultaneously displayed in said display area, in response to a particular user input;

instruction means residing in a computer memory for detecting if a user's hands are positioned at said touch-sensitive input area; and

instruction means residing in a computer memory for graphically displaying a touch-sensitive pad at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area.

16. The program product of claim 14 further comprising:

instruction means residing in a computer memory for detecting if said user's hands are no longer positioned at said touch-sensitive input area; and

instruction means residing in a computer memory for concealing said touch-sensitive pad from view, in response to detecting if said user's hands are no longer positioned at said touch-sensitive input area.

17 ~~16~~. The program product of claim 15 wherein said instruction means residing in a computer memory for graphically displaying a touch-sensitive pad at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area, further comprises:

instruction means residing in a computer memory for graphically displaying a touch-sensitive keyboard at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area.

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18 ~~17~~. The program product of claim 16 wherein said instruction means residing in a computer memory for graphically displaying a touch-sensitive keyboard at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area, further comprises:

instruction means residing in a computer memory for graphically displaying a transparent touch-sensitive keyboard at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area.

19 ~~18~~. The program product of claim 17 further comprising instruction means residing in a computer memory for displaying data in said display area within said display screen, in

response to user data entry at said transparent touch-sensitive keyboard.

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19. The program product of claim 18 wherein said instruction means residing in a computer memory for graphically displaying a touch-sensitive keyboard at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area, further comprises:

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instruction means residing in a computer memory for graphically displaying a touch-sensitive ergonomic keyboard at said touch-sensitive input area within said display screen, in response to detecting a user's hands positioned at said touch-sensitive area, wherein a user may enter data that may be simultaneously displayed in said display area.

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20. The program product of claim 19 further comprising:

instruction means residing in a computer memory for analyzing physical characteristics associated with said user while said user is entering a particular sequence of data utilizing said touch-sensitive keyboard; and

means for configuring said touch-sensitive keyboard such that the sensitivity of said touch-sensitive keyboard may be raised or lowered according to said physical characteristics associated with said user, in response to analyzing said physical characteristics.

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21. The program product of claim 20 wherein each of said instruction means further comprises signal bearing media.

23 ~~22~~. The program product of claim 21 wherein said signal bearing media further comprises transmission media.

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24 ~~21~~. The program product of claim 21 wherein said signal bearing media further comprises recordable media.

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